POINT GRANT SUMMARY - Huey D. Johnson

November 1, 1972 through October 31, 1973

Basically, I see our role as a foundation being very similar to that of teaching, at least in supporting individual activists and decision makers, which I do on principle. I see it much in the sense of training students. You are never sure where the great ones will grow, and you can only plant seeds in the kind of setting where it is apt to succeed.

Time is the important factor. Some can be judged quickly: the successful work of Alan Chadwick, Jim Morgan or Charlie Watson, for instance. Certainly Auroville's attempt at reforestation couldn't be judged for at least five years. Consequently, I have not taken great pains to evaluate the second year's giving.

I do feel that by now I am in better position to evaluate the first year, and some time before leaving the board will do so. I feel that it would be important as a direction for Point to arrange that each board member spend a block of time and money following up, in the years ahead, those grants made by the board member involved. Follow-up like this, if meaningfully done, could lead other foundations to do the same.

GRANTS:

1. Tom DeVries - $500. Tom, a former KQED newsroom staff person, given his grant to appraise the effects of the equal time decision granted by the Federal Communications Division in response to a law suit filed by the proponents of the Coastal Zoning Initiative. Opponents of the initiative had spent millions of dollars compared to the few thousand that the proponents had. It appeared to the opponents that the television time purchased by the big spenders was swamping them. On filing their suit seeking equal time, and having the commission agree, they immediately started getting free equal time in some cities. In other cities, however, TV stations refused to provide it, and opposed the FCC ruling.

The study was to appraise the difference in the public vote between those cities where equal time was given and where it wasn't. A copy of his statement was completed and used in a law review article regarding the outcome of the election. His basic belief was, although there were definitely votes in favor that wouldn't have been cast otherwise, that the TV time was not all that important.

2. Peter Berg - $500. Peter and several of his former Digger colleagues wanted to try an experimental magazine form not done in the past. They delivered it on schedule. The initial issue was several scrolls and a cotton muslin poem, discussing the need for an earth awareness.

3. The Council Grove Conference - $1000. A project of Jerry Mander's. He needed additional support which I gave, based on the assurance it was an important event. On this one, his report will suffice for mine.

4. Mary Jean Haley - $2100. She did a study of the Marincello-Gerbode Preserve evolution. This involved a 2100-acre parcel adjacent to the Golden Gate Bridge which is destined to become part of the federal park. Normally issues of public interest have a great many vectors of pressures working on them, and when one is in the struggle himself, he rarely can appreciate all the factors at work on the issue, and can at best pick out those that seem relevant and close, which will help guide the ship. Mary Jean attempted to piece together the political activist history of the citizens' opposition to a "new town" development that was originally destined to be built on the site. The project itself was extremely complex, and to be done effectively would have taken a team of researchers and multiples of the money provided. We have a draft copy in hand, however. We didn't feel that the cost of additional work, polishing it and piecing it all together, was within our budget framework at this time.

5. Richard Nielsen and Rosemary Menninger - $3000. They were given a grant to undertake an administrative fundraising role for two other grantees, Alan Chadwick and the Olkowskis. They, like those two, were much interested in a survival gardening concept. Eventually Chadwick was able to locate in a town in Northern California and did not in the end need their assistance, although they provided at least $1000 to him from Point funds. The Olkowskis were given a grant based on their putting energy into an urban gardening concept decided to do other things. The result was that Richard and Rosemary formed the Center for Applied Ecology which they will use as a basis for training urban gardeners. Feeling that both for social recreation and survival reasons we should start preparing people to garden in and around the urban centers, they have taken over the Olkowskis' grant as well as the initial $3000 of their own, and have leased property in San Francisco to start their initial garden. Their major emphasis will be in training people.

6. Council on Economic Priorities - $5000. They wanted to start a West Coast operation. Having observed that organization's various efforts and their results, its publications, and later meeting and getting to know its director and others on the staff, I was deeply impressed and felt that this organization was one of the most meaningful that Point had supported. I felt justified in this grant to help get them going in the West. In addition, we were able to raise other funds on a continuing basis.

7. Bill and Helga Olkowski - $5000. They were given the grant for urban gardening programs to be carried out last summer. They are brilliant scientists who had a number of other projects as well, and during the summer they became involved in a training program on a farm near Davis, and were unable to carry out the city program. Thus I withdrew the remaining portion of the grant and applied it to Richard and Rosemary's Center for Applied Ecology.

7. Life Forum (Charles Watson) - $1250. Charles, viewed over a period of 20 years, is one of the most effective activists of our time. He has been, and will continue to be, a catalyst for saving millions of acres of public lands for uses other than the very limited "commodity" ones. He runs the Nevada Outdoor Recreation Association with great effectiveness.

9. Eileen Hulse - $1000. A grant to support an environmental activist who has great potential to become the first professional woman leader in the environmental movement. She is using the funding to support studies involving public organization and land policy as part of her career preparation. She is also using portions of the grant in relation to her night law school program.

10. The Environmental Law Society - UC Davis - $100. This was a prize for a moot court competition on the environment.

11. University of Alaska Earthweek Program - This concerned the stifling of students who felt the need to bring in outside voices for a debate on the Alaska pipeline matter. University officials were said to be under great pressure not to become involved on any basis with the controversy. Professors at the University of Alaska had made the formal request here, and asked that their students personally forward the request and that they oversee the grant. It was given so that the issue could be discussed on a factual basis, and not get hung up with Watergate approaches to important policy decisions at state levels.

12. Patsy Evans - $500. To produce a program based on her skills as a photographer and art student, which involved collecting cartoons with an environmental motif. It is apparent now that there does not seem to be much humor there, at least among the people leading the movement. Patsy was able to put together an entertaining and educational program based on her selection of cartoons with an environmental theme, evolving over the past ten years.

13. Alan Chadwick - one of three gardening grants provided. He is a renowned genius in the area of gardening, and is doing effective work training young people in that area. With the help of Point money he moved from the Bay Area to a new community, Covelo, where he has set up a major program in much better comfort than he was experiencing in the San Francisco area. The grants to him were to assist in his general work.

14. Ecology Center - to Bill Mitchell to undertake a study of a large lake which was being held by speculators on a questionable ownership basis. He did a history of the land price and various environmental factors weighing on the increasing problems the speculators are facing. His report is in hand.

15. Auroville Society - $2500. They received a grant of $2500 from both myself and Richard to support a reforestation project in this new experimental community in Southern India. The money was handled through U.S. sources and is being applied to that program. An additional gift of $1000 went to the representative of Auroville, Alan Lithman, in the form of an activist grant especially to support his fundraising efforts, including the purchase of a camera to better describe what the program involves.

16. The Wheelwright Center - located at the Zen Farm in Marin County, is destined to become a low profile international conference center. Several grants, including one of $500 to assist in the preparation of a fundraising program, were made.

17. Gordon Robinson - $2500. Gordon is the forest products expert for the Sierra Club, and a classic activist. He formerly managed the Southern Pacific's 700,000 acres of timberlands; left them and went to work for the Sierra Club and has been the basis of their successful litigations striving for improved public land management policies in forests.

18. Ivah Deering - $500. She has been a lifelong idealist working in a number of areas, including the full use of the human mind. I believe she is in her eighties now, is still very sharp, and remains completely dedicated, working as a land steward full time on a parcel of land in eastern Washington which she and her husband originally gave to The Nature Conservancy. A copy of her response is attached, and is particularly moving.

19. National Association of Drug Abuse - $500. Grant given on the basis of the individual leaders met at the national conference in Washington, D.C. They are primarily a black organization, at least in leadership, and based on their sales effort at that meeting I sensed that some support was justified.

20. S.P.R. Charter - $2000. An activist grant to support his research. He has a doctorate in physics and left that field to involve himself in humanistic philosphy in relation to technology. He writes and educates full time now, is a scholar living on Tomales Bay. He is something of a scholar in the classic sense, refusing fame and fortune (although I think it could easily be made available to him) in order to pursue ideas which he thinks are of far greater importance.

21. Mid-Peninsula Ecology Center - $2500. To support Mr. and Mrs. John Jeavons with completion of their research on the productivity of a garden managed under the French Intensive Method. Their summary report based on the use of that grant has since been received and is available to those who are interested.

22. The Nature Conservancy - $5000. For the purpose of sending selected staff and board members on a trip to England to look at the British National Trust. The Conservancy is growing and maturing rapidly, and when working at the intense pace carried on inside the organization, it becomes very difficult to grow or understand what an institution and the responsibility of national leadership means.

The British Trust demonstrates institutional leadership. It has been in business fifty years longer than the Conservancy, and has become the largest landowner in Britain as well as the national focus for a land ethic. It occurred to me that the only way I could make the points I tried to make at great length, verbally and through writing in the past, was to sponsor this approach. They accepted, and ten people, both staff and board members, will make the trip.

23. WMSCPI - $600. Given to cover operating costs for that organization at a time when it had a grant en route but not yet received, and the staff needed support. The grant was handled by Clancy Gordon, a botanist at the University.

24. Martin MacClain - a grant to support him in his program regarding the Alcatraz Foundation. Martin's belief is that Alcatraz Island should be returned to wilderness. Using the support, he has put out a poetic pamphlet which is being broadly distributed, and was, for instance, passed out at the dedication day ceremonies for the island.

25. Lewis Reid - $1500. For preparation of a basic legal position which hopefully will include the forms a community will need to establish a land banking program. Lewis will employ a young attorney and will add funding in order to accomplish the job. Wha finished, it will be available to communities on request.

26. Don Michaels, U. of Michigan - $1500. Being sent on to Life Forum to cover the cost of a Detroit land banking study. Several years ago Detroit tried a very ambitious land banking program which failed. No one has ever studied it to find out why it was not successful, and this was the basis for that study. A University of Michigan student will be assigned the task.

27. Narcanon - $1000. The Peninsula drug treatment group was given this amount to support its program of rehabilitation of drug users, and especially those who are in prison. It is an innovative, self-help approach built on the theories of a convict who cured himself. It appears to have a solid administrative structure, and I felt it could have excellent chances for success.

28. The African Wildlife Leadership Foundation - $1000. To support its work in training black african professionals to manage the wildlife resources in Africa. Because some of their training in developing leaders in the area, these leaders have evolved into political positions and have been instrumental in planning, which could save some third world countries' world heritage, at least. For instance, Tanzania now has tourist dollars as its second largest source of income. Consequently, they are starting to look at the large parks remaining and consider them in an economic sense as being worthy of maintenance. I feel this approach in training people in their countries to take care of their own problems has great hope.

29. Travel Industry for the Environment (TIE) - $1000. A new organization, its goal is to orient the travel industry toward an environmental ethic and action to support it. Recently, for instance, they held a conference in Mexico recommending land use plans that would maintain quality around key resort areas, etc., and the Mexican government has implemented some of these. They are new, and they provide a meeting ground for both industry and the environmental movement to combine efforts to maintain the quality of areas which otherwise would be cemented over. The chairman of TIE is black.

30. Richard Nielsen - $600. To support one month's study regarding the purchase of house sites or lots, and purchase of empty lots in black ghettos which are now owned by HUD. These generally have come from FHA foreclosures. At the moment, they are unused. They could be purchased very reasonably, and Richard's goal is to ascertain whether the people living around them would be interested in seeing them established as tot lots and gardens.

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